



Natick Finance Committee

Pursuant to Chapter 40, Section 3 of the Town of Natick By-Laws, I attest that the attached copy is the approved copy of the minutes for the following meeting:

Town of Natick Finance Committee
Meeting Date: March 11, 2014

The minutes were approved through the following action:

Motion:	Approval
Made by:	Mr. Pierce
Seconded by:	Ms. Coughlin
Vote:	11-0-0
Date:	March 25, 2014

Respectfully submitted,

James Everett
Secretary
Natick Finance Committee

NATICK FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

March 11, 2014

**Natick Town Hall
School Committee Meeting Room, Third Floor**

This meeting has been properly posted as required by law.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jonathan Freedman, Chairman	Michael Ferrari
Jimmy Brown	Cathleen Collins
John Ciccariello	Patrick Hayes
Catherine Coughlin	Mark Kelleher
Bruce Evans, Vice Chairman	Jerry Pierce
James Everett, Clerk	Christopher Resmini
Karen Adelman Foster	

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Edward Shooshanian
Mari Barrera

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Agenda for this evening's meeting
- B. Finance Committee Hearing Schedule Changes
- C. Article 6 – Shaw Park – Taking by Eminent Domain
- D. Memo from the Town Administrator with attachments (3 pgs)
- E. Article 18 – Homeless Student Transportation Subsidy (11 pgs)
- F. Analysis of Homeless Student Transportation Cost (1 pg)
- G. Article 26 – School Bus Transportation Subsidy (2 pgs)
- H. Article 31 – Establish One-to-One Technology Stabilization Fund (1 pg)
- I. Article 44 – Smart Growth Overlay (SGO) District for West Natick (2 pgs)
- J. Letter to Jonathan Freedman from Robert J. Drew, Chairman of the Contributory Retirement System
- K. Appropriation Summary of the Facilities Department *Revised January 30, 2014* page IX 35 through IX.37
- L. Appropriation Summary of the Town Clerk Department *Revised March 4, 2014* page VII.49 through IX.33

Meeting was called to order by Mr. Freedman at 7:04 p.m.

The Chairman reviewed the evening's agenda and the materials included in the handouts. He also invited members and attendees to discuss any items that are not on the agenda.

PUBLIC CONCERNS/COMMENTS:

Mr. Brown would like to remind every that on March 12, 2014 in the School Committee Meeting Room, 3rd Floor, Town Hall, at 7:00 p.m. the sixth annual School Committee Debate will be held.

Mr. Freedman noted that, with the Contributory Retirement Budget there was concern and disappointment that the Contributory Retirement Board had opted not to join the Financial Committee to discuss its budget. The letter that the Committee received from their attorney caused further disappointment.

Mr. Freedman has received another letter from the Natick Retirement Board which he read into the record:

Dated March 10, 2014, addressed to Jonathan H. Freedman, Chairman of the Town of Natick Finance Committee verbatim content of the letter follows.

Re: Attendance at Finance Committee Meeting

Dear Mr. Freedman:

It has recently come to the Natick Retirement Board's ("Board") attention that the letter our attorney sent to you regarding our declining an invitation to appear before the Finance Committee was possibly misconstrued as a "snub" or as an expression of the Board's displeasure with the way in which our representatives were treated at their last appearance before the Finance Committee Meeting in September 2013. The Board discussed this issue at its February 27, 2014 meeting and thought it best to respond to these issues in the hope that the Board and the Finance Committee can return to the collegial relationship we have enjoyed in the last several years.

While the interaction with the retirement board over of (sic) the last six (6) months has been troubling at times, it is the sincere wish of this Board to put these unfortunate events behind us and work at returning to the productive and respectful relationship we previously enjoyed. This Board has been an excellent steward of the assets of the Natick Retirement System, and last year posted an investment return of 18.6%. In fact, in each of the last 5 years, the Board, with the assistance of its investment consultant Fiduciary Investment Advisors and its investment manager of managers SEI, has annually outperformed the PRIT Fund – resulting in *millions* of dollars in comparative investment gains, all the while acting as a prudent fiduciary in seeking to address the System's unfunded liability. We are certainly happy to share this news with the Finance Committee in particular and the Town of Natick in general, and we continuously look for ways to move the System forward in a productive, prudent and transparent manner.

The Board is certainly willing to appear before the Finance Committee in the future as part of a cooperative effort to provide information. Similarly, if the Finance Committee has questions of the Board, we would welcome any members and place them on the agenda to answer any questions the Finance Committee may have in furthering the spirit of cooperation. In our view, whatever differences or misunderstandings there may have been should not be dwelled upon, and we would like to move forward in a more collegial manner that best serves all our interests.

We hope that you will share this letter with the members of the Finance Committee, and feel free to read it into the record as you have with our prior correspondence.

Signed by Robert J. Drew, Chairman

Copied to Board of Selectmen; Martha White, Town Administrator; and Joseph E. Connarton, PERAC

MEETING MINUTES:

Mr. Freedman turned the floor over to Mr. Everett to chair discussion of Meeting Minutes.

Mr. Everett referred the members to Financial Committee Meeting Minutes from February 25, 2014 and March 6, 2014.

After the February 25th minutes were sent out with Mari Barrera's name mistyped as Maria Barrera, correction of this error was made. With respect to the February 25th minutes, Mr. Kelleher and Ms. Adelman Foster are ineligible to vote.

Cathy Collins corrected page ten, paragraph three: change "inappropriate" to "appropriate." Page eighteen, paragraph beginning "actuarial experience" the phrase "every time we **had** to staff" should have read "every time we **add** to staff."

Mr. Evans corrected page 17, it reads "trustees of the **Morris** library" should read "trustees of the **Morse** library." Page 18 under Evans' comments it reads "as distasteful **and** their actions should be" should read, "as distasteful **as** their actions should be." Just below that area where it says "**Collins**" it should be "**Ms. Collins.**"

A motion was made to approve the Amended Minutes of the February 25, 2014 meeting of the Finance Committee.

Moved/Motioned by:	Ms. Pierce
Seconded by:	Mr. Evans
Motions or Debates:	None
Vote	11-0-0 approval as amended

A motion was made to approve the Minutes of the March 6, 2014 meeting of the Finance Committee. Ms. Collins and Mr. Resmini are ineligible to vote.

Moved/Motioned by:	Mr. Pierce
Seconded by:	Mr. Hayes
Motions or Debates:	None
Vote	11-0-0 approval

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

OLD BUSINESS:

Hearing Schedule Changes

Regarding updated schedule dated March 6, 2014, Article 12 has been added to the agenda for March 18, 2014. Also, the Town Clerk's Budget regarding salary and the Selectmen's Budget will be added to the March 20, 2014 agenda. Mr. Freedman requested all Financial Committee members to review their notes and confirm whether there were any further outstanding votes for the Committee to act upon.

Subcommittee Updates

The Zoning By-Law Sub-Committee's meeting reviewing all the zoning articles in front of the Planning Board was not posted by the Town Clerk early enough to allow the sub-committee meeting to be legally held. Because the Zoning Board is meeting later the same night to review these same Articles, Mr. Ciccariello intends to attend the Zoning Board meeting and invites all sub-committee members to attend as well even though they cannot discuss or vote on any of the Articles.

Mr. Freedman added that any citizen of Natick can attend the Zoning Board meeting and address the board as a citizen within the confines of usual meeting rules. No rights are relinquished from attending other meetings as a citizen when you are a Finance Committee member.

Ms. Collins reminded all that Wednesday's the Education Sub-Committee was cancelled so it will meet on March 12, 2014 at 8:00 a.m. in the School Committee Room.

Mr. Freedman noted that the Financial Planning Committee will be meeting on Thursday, March 13, 2014, in the Selectmen's Meeting Room at 8:00 a.m.

Ms. White, Town Administrator, asked that the Finance Committee add a snow and ice over-draft request on an upcoming agenda. This was confirmed by Mr. Freedman.

Motion to reopen the public hearing of the 2014 Spring Annual Town Meeting Warrant

Moved/Motioned by:	Mr. Ciccariello
Seconded by:	Mr. Evans
Motions or Debates:	None.
Vote	13-0-0 (Unanimous)

Re-Open Public Hearing 2014 Spring Annual Town Meeting Warrant

Article 6: Shaw Park – Taking by Eminent Domain

Mr. Freedman invited Ms. White, Town Administrator to the podium.

Shaw Park was given to the Town in March of 1934. Recently it was discovered that there is no Deed on record confirming that Natick owns this property. The most effective way to remove this cloud from the title and create a legal deed is for the town to take the property by eminent domain. A full title examination and a survey of the land has been ordered and those completed documents will facilitate the drafting of a Deed which will confirm that the land is legally owned by the Town of Natick.

A Town Meeting vote of 1934 explicitly accepted the property for park purposes. The Town Administrator would like to word the motion specifically to again stipulate the property for park purposes.

Questions and comments from committee members were as follows:

- Members voiced concern about the relationship of the Shaw Park deed project with the Sawin House move project. Research on the Sawin house move project uncovered the missing Deed for Shaw Park, however, each project is distinct and unrelated.
- As far as the Town Administrator knows the town has never had to take land by eminent domain before. With respect to the original acceptance of the land, Town meeting had the opportunity to accept this Article in 1933 but did not at the time. In 1934 town meeting did accept this Article.
- Members debated how the State of Massachusetts defines a “park” and whether there would be any issue for the town regarding this definition. The Town Administrator confirmed that the wording of the motion will define this parcel as the 1934 wording defined the parcel.
- The current Article 6 refers to more land by square foot than the original Article from 1934. Shaw Park is listed as one parcel at the higher square footage on the current Natick assessor's map, however there is no record of how the original land expanded to the higher square footage between 1934 and 2014.

Some theories suggested were that landscaping and simple use and care of the parcel may have unintentionally expanded its visual boundaries leading to an eventual new perception of boundaries. Also, the parcel may have been wrongly measured either in 1934 or when Natick measured it more recently for the Assessors record.

There was further discussion surrounding any liability to the town for the taking of the land at the higher square footage. The Town Administrator believes that the 20-year time limit in the adverse possession law in Massachusetts would likely cover the town in this case. Her final

explanation was that once the meets and bounds of this property, in relationship to the surrounding properties, are confirmed by the survey, the park square footage will be determined by taking into consideration all the surrounding properties legal deeded boundaries.

- In addressing members' concerns regarding the possibly moving the Sawin House to the Shaw Park property, the Town Administrator stated that the objective of this warrant is only to clear the title of the Isabella Shaw gift. Also there is no rush to clear the title, however, since the research will be done in a week or so it makes sense to clear the title as soon as possible.
- Funds for the survey and title search are coming out of the DPW/Engineering budget and total cost is expected to be approximately \$2,000.00.
- Because the land was given with the stipulation that it should be used as a park, it has virtually the same protections as if it were conservation land. With respect to care and custody of the Shaw Park property, Natick recreation and parks has jurisdiction over a property but it is considered owned by the Town of Natick Selectmen for care, custody and control for the Town of Natick.
- Common understanding of the public land legal rules is that it cannot have anything built on it without two-thirds approval of the State of Massachusetts Legislature. Take away: We would like the statutory reference to the Article in Massachusetts General Laws on the definition of a park.

Mr. Freedman invited Mr. Eliot Goodman, a member of the Natick Historical commission was invited to the podium.

Mr. Goodman, a member of the Natick Historical Society for approximately 25 years summarized the Society's research regarding Shaw Park.

Mrs. Shaw was a Honeywell and lived in Wellesley and was a benefactor to the Town of Natick. She allegedly gave three parcels to the Town of Natick, Shaw Gym, the Honeywell Fields and Shaw Park. This information was gleaned from town library records and other research.

Shaw Park was originally a hotel called the Bailey Hotel. It burned to the ground, Mrs. Shaw gave up the hotel business and she gave the Town of Natick the three parcels of land. The time period was during the Great Depression and during this time lawyers would "pocket the deed" rather than pay the fee for recording to the county. This may have been the case with the Shaw deeds – but there is no confirmation of the deeds' whereabouts.

With respect to the extra 4,000 square feet of land in question on the assessor's maps, Mr. Goodman put forth an educated theory. When the fire occurred Mrs. Shaw ordered the demolition of the remaining structure. She then created a park – outlining the property with stone walls and possibly not paying attention to then legal meets and bounds. And, it's possible that the deed on hand that we consider to be Mrs. Shaw's deed may have simply been transferred and not re-drawn at the time the land was conveyed to Mrs. Shaw. So the property meets and bounds measurements may be very old and inaccurate. Mr. Goodman also suggested that Adverse Possession is likely to apply in this instance.

Move that the Finance Committee take favorable action regarding Article 6 Recommending to Take Shaw Park by Eminent Domain

Moved/Motioned by:	Mr. Pierce
Seconded by:	Ms. Adelman Foster
Motions or Debates:	Mr. Pierce: Has complete confidence that the Town Administrator will provide the Committee with any information if it adversely affects the town. Also, he is favorable because the Town Administrator took care to word

	<p>the motion to confirm that the original intent of the gift was preserved.</p> <p>Ms. Adelman Foster the town has made a reasonable case for favorable actions and thinks it makes sense for the committee to vote a favorable action and revisit if more pertinent information comes to the Town Administrator's attention.</p> <p>Mr. Hayes: Encourages the committee to approve this article. Further, he approves this article on the basis that the town considers it housekeeping regarding an unrecorded deed. He makes the point that he only approves the use of this land for a park as originally intended and does not approve of any related articles suggesting the Sawin house be located on Shaw Park property and he encourages the committee to think about this point as well.</p> <p>Ms. Coughlin: is abstaining because she feels more information should be complete before making this decision.</p> <p>Mr. Brown: Approves the article with the confidence that the Town Administrator will come forward with any problems if they arise.</p> <p>Mr. Everett: We are trying to create a Deed by what is defined by the stone walls that encircle this land. We are taking by eminent domain a parcel that we have been using for over 30 years anyway. It makes sense to Deed this land properly to the Town of Natick.</p> <p>Mr. Ciccariello: Will support the article but asks that the Town Administrator report back to the Chair of the Finance Committee with all of the data that is due in the next few days so that the Committee is well-informed on this matter. The extra 4,000 square feet is a small concern given the facts.</p>
Vote	12-0-1

Article 31: Establish One-to-One Technology Stabilization Fund

Mr. Freedman invited Dr. Peter Sanchioni, Superintendent of Schools and Ms. White, Town Administrator.

To create a funding plan for the sustainability of student devices/computers for grades 9 through 12. The idea would be that this accounting fund would have a specific definition to support one-to-one technology for the Natick public schools, however, this account would open unfunded. Available funding will be determined at a future town meeting dependent on available revenue. A reliable funding source will allow the School Department to create a viable sustainability plan for future purchases and communicate that plan to parents and the community.

This fund is to be a separate savings account with a goal to avoid the spikes that occur during the years when new devices are needed for the high school. The idea is to keep this plan in place because this is a recurring cost every few years. This could be funded out of capital stabilization but the school wanted to put away monies separately for this purpose.

As of yet there is not a specific plan for where this money will come from, however, the plan is being devised at this time and having this vehicle at the ready will make the process smoother

Ms. Collins spoke on behalf of the Education Sub-Committee. The essence of the goal of this article is to fund devices for the high school grades 9 through 12 only. The idea is that this account, when funded, may not cover all of the costs in the future but will be a bank to ease the financial burden when these purchases come up. A stabilization fund is always subject to a possible two-thirds vote at town meeting to take these funds for another purpose. This is a way to ear-mark funds to anticipate and document the future need and resulting spike so that it will not get lost among all the other needs in the town budget. However, town meeting has the power, with a two-thirds vote, to move this money to more pressing need if they choose.

Questions and comments from committee members were as follows:

- In response to the suggestion that a revolving fund supported by capital from selling the used equipment be instituted instead of a stabilization fund, the Superintendent responded that there is no policy to date regarding selling used equipment but also historically selling used equipment has generated very little revenue. The device value drops off so dramatically by the time the school is done using it that benefit barely outweighs the effort. The plan for obtaining funds includes a possible proposal to ask for a percentage of the next free cash certification.
- Although technology cost is unpredictable and hard to define, the high school has mapped out when replacement will be necessary and right now they are in year three of a five-year scenario. At this time, there are two years left in order to make a plan for replacement and this stabilization fund request is part of the larger replacement planning.
- The cyclical nature of this expense makes it problematic as a budget item because it causes such a spike in the amount of funds requested by the schools. Therefore, it is the opinion of the Superintendent and the Town Administrator that it is better to build a fund for this project.

Move favorable action on the subject matter of Article 31 to establish a one-to-one stabilization fund

Moved/Motioned by:	Ms. Collins
Seconded by:	Mr. Evans
Motions or Debates:	<p>Ms. Collins: Agrees that keeping this out of the school budget because it is better given the cyclical nature of this expense to save the money separately and ahead of time.</p> <p>Mr. Evans: Following the trends, this way will help this particular need to be more visible than if it were buried in a school budget, peaking and falling over time. He supports this fund and believes it will help to better assess how this may eventually become a budget item.</p> <p>Mr. Hayes: Will vote for favorable action because the article is just an enabling vehicle to get something done. Having said that I hope that we understand that this is a vote to set up a fund and is not necessarily an endorsement of the long-term plan and the schedule for that long-term plan because we have yet to see what those items are yet.</p> <p>Mr. Everett: Wants to make sure that there is no expectation</p>

	<p>about where these funds will come from. We want to make sure that when departments save the town money the reasons behind saving is for the good of the town and not because they want to reapply to get this money back for a different purpose. We need to be sure not to set up any expectations as to what the funding source for this account will be at this time.</p> <p>Mr. Ciccariello: As this is just the creation of the stabilization fund and it is not any discussion around the funding of it so he will support it. He expressed reticence to create yet another stabilization fund, however, the prospect of a half-million dollar expense coming up in two years is also not a great prospect. In favor of creating this fund but would like people to think about a possible better way to fund this program as time goes on.</p> <p>Mr. Brown: The town is going to have to pay for this no matter what budget it comes from and it makes sense to try to spread the expense out over time. This program is obviously going to be on-going so a plan needs to be put in place.</p> <p>Mr. Freedman: Will support the Article. He likes the transparency, the fact that it will keep the peaks and valleys out of the operating budget and the effect it will hopefully have on forecasting the school budget over time. Just like the town has financial principals governing its other stabilization funds, he would urge the town to collaboratively create a set of financial principals for the use of this fund if it is passed by town meeting.</p>
Vote	13-0-0 (Unanimous)

Article 18: Homeless Student Transportation Subsidy

Mr. Freedman welcomed William Hurley, Director of Fiscal and Management Services and Dr. Peter Sanchioni, Superintendent of Schools to discuss Article 18 review of homeless student transportation study.

The purpose of this Warrant Article is to provide funds to cover the unforeseen expense of transporting students living in homeless shelters located in Natick. Since the acceptance of the FY14 budget an unforeseen number of homeless students who need transportation to and from school in their home district have moved into Natick.

Currently Natick has 66 students living in homeless shelters in Natick. Of those 66 students 40 of them require transportation back to their home districts in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act which ensures the immediate enrollment and educational stability for any homeless child living in any town. The transportation costs are shared 50/50 with the child's home district and the child's residential district.

The homeless student population in Massachusetts is up 31% since the beginning of FY2014. The school department had budgeted an amount consistent with the amount spent in prior years. However, to date the expense incurred are approximately \$106,000 and are projecting that from this point in the year forward to incur another \$162,000 for a total for FY2014 of \$268,000. This is a \$233,000 increase over the FY2014 budget.

The funding source for this expense that was discussed with the education sub-committee will be investigated in the following order: first any school savings or surpluses in the general school budget account, then the state of Massachusetts McKinney-Vento reimbursement of approximately \$20 to \$25 thousand dollars for FY2013 will be used, and then whatever remains in this account will be turned back to the town free cash fund.

Questions and comments from committee members were as follows:

- Ms. Collins stated that the School Subcommittee voted 5-0-0 in favor of this article on February 20, 2014. This issue has come up every year and the school committee always budgeted for it. It seems that many of these homeless families are coming from Framingham so someone from Framingham has discovered that many of the rooms at the Monticello actually reside in and pay taxes in Natick. Before this discovery, Framingham had been picking up much of these bus transportation costs. This year Natick has had to pay its full responsibility toward this formerly unknown expense. Between this change and the up-tick in homelessness in general in Massachusetts this jump in transportation costs took the town by surprise.

This has now been taken into consideration for the FY2015 budget, however, at this time this expense needs to be funded.

- State department of Home and Development places families in emergency shelters. Natick happens to have two motels on this list of emergency shelters and the Department has seen fit to use them this year. A parent has the choice to educate their children in the town they are from or educate them in the town where they are placed.
- Members wondered whether Natick attempts to reach out to these families to let them know about Natick public schools. In light of current enrollment issues in the town of Natick the schools have not done any outreach. Also, normally you get children at odd times in the year and the curriculum does not always match up and it is often hard for the children to integrate into the Natick system without using other costly resources because of this.
- What is the difference in the cost to bus children to their hometown and the cost of integrating them into the Natick schools? There are many factors to consider – the child's needs for resources; the district to which they originally belong and other costs. The cost to educate a student in the Natick school system, short of any special programs versus the cost of the transportation subsidy is not quantifiable on a general basis. Also, the spirit of the law is to not move the student around to the detriment of their educational stability.
- Point of information: the requested funding for this Article is \$233,000 – the Town Administrator stated that her preferred funding source for this would be free cash and if the total is not used the remainder returns to free cash. If the any funds come in from the state or there are any changes she will update this request prior to town meeting but for now this is the request.
- The Town Administrator's office will be doing a reconciliation for the omnibus FY 2014 budget of certified free cash to confirm that all the numbers balance. This is routine before town meeting anyway. If town meeting appropriates these funds for this purpose and it is not all spent, it automatically returns to free cash.

Move favorable action on the subject matter of Article 18 the Homeless Student Transportation Subsidy in the amount of \$233,000 from free cash

Moved/Motioned by:	Ms. Collins
Seconded by:	Mr. Pierce
Motions or Debates:	Ms. Collins: This was an unforeseen expense. Encouraging all

	<p>the families to move to the Natick schools seems like a good idea until we look at all the constraints on the number of seats we have in the building right now. The spirit of the Act is not to strong-arm the parents but also, when these kids lose their homes, sometimes their friends at school are the only stability they've got. We would prefer that the state send the closer families to Natick, but we have no control over the State's decision making process. There's not much we can do about this – the rise in homeless families and the way that the state of Massachusetts places them is out of our hands. We have provided for this next year – and this year we need to support the requested amount.</p> <p>Mr. Pierce: Supports Ms. Collins' statements that is, there is no alternative given the placement of the homeless. We should petition our legislators to find more housing for the homeless but in the meantime this needs to be done we should support it.</p> <p>Mr. Ciccariello Supports this Article because it's mandated. We should press our State Legislators to take more responsibility for the homeless and the towns should be reimbursed for more of these expenses. He is in support of this but we should press our Legislators for action on these issues.</p>
Vote	13-0-0 (Unanimous)

Article 26: School Bus Transportation Subsidy

Mr. Freedman invited William Hurley, Director of Fiscal and Management Services and Dr. Peter Sanchioni, Superintendent of Schools to present Article 26 to the committee.

This Article returns every year to the table and it supports the large yellow bus transportation throughout Natick and it helps keep the cost of bus fees to families at an affordable level. Currently we use 21 buses to transport approximately 3,100 students. The amount being requested is \$360,750.00, a three percent increase over FY 2014. This Article's funding does not reside on the school committee books but is a general government account. Similar to the homeless funding source, we have three funding sources to absorb the cost of the regular transportation budget. First we use our own budget, second we go to family bus fees and when that is exhausted we tap into the regular school bus transportation subsidy account. Over the past two years we have turned back \$29,000 in FY2013 and \$50,000 in FY2012. Without this support from the town the bus fee would go from \$150 per child to \$330.

Ms. Collins reported that the Education subcommittee supported this Article 5-0-0 February 20, 2014. This is to keep bus fees low and the reason it's brought up as a separate article is so the funds don't get lost in the mix and end up being needed for something else during the budget year.

Amount of money has been allocated from tax levy in her budget. If the amount for homeless transportation goes up it will not involve these funds.

Questions and comments from committee members were as follows:

- No matter how many children a family has the maximum they pay is \$300 per family. This has not been raised in 6 years at the least.

Move to recommend that the Finance Committee take favorable action in the matter of Article 26 in the amount of \$360,750 from the tax levy

Moved/Motioned by:	Mr. Ciccariello
Seconded by:	Mr. Pierce
Motions or Debates:	<p>Mr. Ciccariello: There's a limit to what you can charge a family for this fee. Families are also charged for activity fees and other matters. We need to get the children to school safely so I urge you to support this Action.</p> <p>Mr. Pierce: Supports for all the reasons above. There are so many fees on parents not just from the schools but elsewhere in the town – we need to support this Article and get the kids to school safely.</p> <p>Ms. Collins: This is a way to help keep the fees down for families and the other consideration is traffic during the morning and afternoon at the schools. Bussing is a safer and better option.</p> <p>Mr. Everett: The traffic is very bad surrounding drop off and pick up from the schools so keeping bus costs lower to families will help with traffic. We do need to make sure that the bussing funds are not co-mingled but otherwise support of this Article makes sense.</p>
Vote	13-0-0 (Unanimous)

Five-minute break at 9:40 p.m.

Re-open public hearing on Warrant Article 44

Mr. Freedman welcomed Attorney George Richards to the podium to summarize and present Article 44.

Mr. Evans announced that his wife is on the Planning Board but that will not influence him one way or another.

Article 44: Smart Growth Overlay (SGO) District of West Natick

The article presented to obtain support of Town Meeting to create Chapter 40R District to create economic redevelopment and affordable housing near the West Natick train station.

The Natick Planning Board encouraged researching the possibility of this request wanted more information. This district pictured on the map handout covers approximately a one-half mile from the train station to Mill Street. The State of Massachusetts prefers a larger less piece-meal district. Most of the current zoning is residential/commercial and the overlay option does not take away any of that zoning but does add an affordable housing component -- 40R requires 20% affordable housing.

Business owners and residents are excited to see this area revitalized. Financial incentives of 40R are significant. Upon approval of zoning the state makes the calculation of the number of units that would be allowed under the 40R. So you take the acreage you come up with the number of units fully built out then subtract the number of units that could be built under current zoning and the difference is the town's payment. So, if the difference was approximately 100 to 200 units it would be a \$200,000 incentive payment to the town upon state approval and upon approval of the zoning. If it's 200 to 500 units it's a \$350,000 payment to the town, an incentive payment for infrastructure. In addition to that the state will pay \$3,000 per unit upon the issuance of a building permit for each unit.

There will also be financial costs. There will be some school children. Presumably this is expected to be an apartment driven, smart-growth area that will not generate a lot of children, but that is something that would have to be factored in as a cost.

Created ten years ago the Housing Option Overlay District (HOOP) Natick's affordable zoning and/or housing by-law allows 15% affordable housing in exchange for greater unit density. HOOP 2 is less dense but still more dense than normal zoning will allow. The Armory was developed under HOOP 2.

Mr. Freedman welcomed Attorney Richard Glazer who lives in the area as well as works in his office in the area being discussed. Smart growth option provides incentives. People in the area were impressed and happy that the town might have West Natick in favor of this.

Questions and comments from committee members were as follows:

- Although many town residents who signed the petition to get the Warrant in front of the Committee were very positive about the possibility of revitalizing West Natick, residents of West Natick have not been polled with respect to how they feel about this necessarily.
- The three areas in question are east of the train station, west of the train station and south of the train station. Potential for 32 acres to be developed – (information gained from assessors website) 12.2 acres on West side; 24 acres on the east side. DHCD prefers 20 units per acre potential which under the presented possible scenario could be upwards of 640 units of housing. What would be the cost of building out 640 units? Curious about building permit fees. If we were to convert to 40R how many parking spaces would be required? It might require underground parking. What does the present zoning allow for on these three sites that you mentioned?
- Members would like to see a copy of the warrant article petition.

Ms. Coughlin recused herself as she has a disinterest in this matter given that if this development were to make rents rise this would adversely affect her business. Mr. Brown is partners with one of the speakers this evening and his business is located in that area so he too recused himself from this warrant article discussion.

- Affordable housing has to be of the same quality and scope of a market rate unit. State requires the development to be deed restricted 40R for 30 years. How many students could likely be added to the Natick schools during this time?
- Planning Board has not sponsored and had concerns on the size and density of the project and also pushing businesses out of town by residential housing. When the developer uses the 40B designation it limits the town from putting in zoning controls. With 40R gives the town more leverage to condition zoning to protect abutters both residential and commercial.
- Is this development strictly for housing or are there any other plans for mixed use? These are concepts that still need to be explored. Would town want some services nearby. Affordable means 80% of the median income in the town – this is not a low income affordable housing project, it's a moderate income project.
- Natick is currently over its quota for public housing.
- Does the state drive or want retail in this type of project? No, the State wants housing. Does the state remunerate the town for commercial vs. residential? Unknown. Are we putting the cart before the horse getting this approved by the town if this zoning area is not approved by DHCD?
- Why aren't we considering 8 units per acre or 12 units per acre instead of large buildings with lots of rental units? Concerns about 8 single family homes on one acre and 12 units per acre.

What about mass transit? Is the west Natick station able to handle this influx of use? Unknown at this time.

Mr. Freedman invited Nancy Lavash, a citizen of the town of Natick to the podium.

Ms. Lavash would like to point out that there are four complexes already over in the area being discussed. Many residents in the area already walk to the trains but the traffic is horrendous. Also, she feels it is very important to put in any by-law that the affordable aspect of the housing would be kept forever.

Mr. Freedman welcomed Brian Hill of OB Trucking & Rigging Company which operates out of the studied neighborhood. Mr. Hill's family has operated and owned property for 80 years he thinks this development would benefit his family and his business.

Attorney George Richards was again welcomed to the podium.

On a number of different factors, this is an overlay zone, the people who are satisfied with their property and their buildings would remain.

Move to postpone vote until 3/18/2014 meeting of the Financial Committee

Moved/Motioned by:	Mr. Everett
Seconded by:	Mr. Evans (for discussion)
Motions or Debates:	<p>Mr. Everett: Feels we should wait until the Planning Board looks at this first because it may change and then they may need to vote again on a different referral recommended by the Planning Board.</p> <p>Mr. Evans: Wanted to hear the argument on the referral motion.</p> <p>Mr. Everett: convinced by his fellow members that this Motion should be referred for the time being and withdrew the motion.</p>
Vote	NA

Move for Referral of Article 44 to the Planning Board and sponsor.

Moved/Motioned by:	Mr. Hayes
Seconded by:	Ms. Collins
Motions or Debates:	<p>Mr. Hayes: Wants to explore 40S and its benefits in comparison with 40R – particularly with respect to the impact on the schools. He thinks the development itself is a good idea and wants to see the area developed tastefully. The impact on the schools will be huge and he is concerned about the number of children that might impact the schools during the years of development. With this homework done he would be fairly consider the idea as he feels it is a valuable one.</p> <p>Ms. Collins: Vote for referral but the idea has merit and she would hate to see it go away. Parking is a concern because of the train station and the likelihood that people using the train service may use these spaces. We are too close to town meeting to get all the information we require to understand how this plan might affect the</p>

	<p>town.</p> <p>Mr. Pierce: Thinks this is a great idea with respect to rejuvenating that area of Natick. But will choose to refer at this time because not enough information.</p> <p>Mr. Ciccariello: There's a methodology and process to use as to how to develop a community as a whole. There are too many questions with "maybe" answers. There should be some consideration of how to develop West Natick. A development of this consequence, a potential to develop 640 units, is significant. This will impact West Central Street which already has major traffic problems now. One-time incentives are just not very much, but in fairness to the sponsors, it is important for us as a Finance Committee – we understand that the planning board has their role but there needs to be some work done on this proposal and there are ways to make this a better project. Natick needs to create zoning that will develop mixed housing units to make a quality development and not just rental housing.</p> <p>Mr. Evans: Doesn't want to see one size fits all cookie cutter project done. This project needs a lot of work but also has a lot of potential. We need to know about the townspeople of Natick's concerns about this project. This needs to be a well-thought-out project to make sure it's the best situation for Natick.</p> <p>Mr. Freedman: Thinks this is an idea that is worthy of pursuit particularly under something other than 40B which would allow the town to exercise a modicum of control while still pursuing the objectives of the town, property owners and the residents that are in that area. This is not a vote of no confidence we would like to see this again it has a lot of value.</p> <p>Mr. Evans: Will let the Planning Board know of this vote.</p>
Vote	10-0-0 (Unanimous)

Move to close public hearing on warrant articles.

Moved/Motioned by:	Mr. Everett
Seconded by:	Mr. Evans
Motions or Debates:	None.
Vote	10-0-0 (Unanimous)

Move to adjourn at 10:55 p.m.

Moved/Motioned by:	Mr. Pierce
Seconded by:	Mr. Collins
Motions or Debates:	None.
Vote	10-0-0 (Unanimous)